



October 27, 2013

Dear Members of the Senate Agriculture Committee,

The Lakeshore Pet Alliance is a coalition of Muskegon County animal shelters, rescues, spay/neuter services, pet care businesses, and animal welfare organizations devoted to preventing animal abuse and fighting and addressing pet overpopulation in our county. We respectfully ask for your support of SB 560 to require large-scale dog breeding facilities to adhere to existing standards of care for pet stores and shelters, and to help ensure the humane treatment of the animals in those facilities.

Members of our coalition are responsible for the care of stray and homeless pets in Muskegon County. We often receive calls about suspected neglect at dog breeding facilities in our region, or with complaints about dog breeders selling pets in public locations without regulation or standards. We are concerned that there is currently no mechanism in place to regulate large dog breeding facilities. SB 560 would require those entities to register with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, so that officials can monitor the care of the animals in those facilities and help prevent conditions deteriorating to the point that our shelters and rescues are faced with taking in even more animals due to neglect.

Like many Michigan counties, we also have a stray cat overpopulation problem. We struggle daily to keep up with the amount of cats that come into our shelters and rescues let alone trying to find homes for them. So we are encouraged that SB 560 clarifies holding periods for stray cats, which will result in many more feline lives being saved in Michigan by reducing the outbreak of infectious disease that inevitably occurs in overcrowded shelters. Stray cats in Michigan are reclaimed at a much lower rate (about 2%) than dogs, so getting cats quickly into the adoption stream before they can become ill can save thousands of lives.

The people of Muskegon County care very much about the treatments of pets, whether they are homeless, in shelters or rescues, or in breeding facilities. Therefore, members of the Lakeshore Pet Alliance ask for your support of SB 560 to help improve standards of care for pets in our county and across Michigan. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Rachel Morr  
Becky Gawkowski  
Deb Casemier Rewitzer  
*Lakeshore Pet Alliance Board Officers*

**[www.LakeshorePetAlliance.org](http://www.LakeshorePetAlliance.org)**